

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
OFFICE OF MARINE SAFETY

In the Matter of:

MAJOR MARINE ACCIDENT	:	
COLLISION JAPANESE FISHERIES	:	
TRAINING VESSEL EHIME MARU AND	:	NTSB Project ID
U.S. NAVY NUCLEAR ATTACK	:	No. 51701
SUBMARINE USS GREENVILLE	:	DCA01MM022

Recorded Telephone Interview JOHN HALL.
(TAPE 8, SIDES A AND B)

Tuesday,
February 20, 2001

BEFORE:

DONALD J. TYRRELL, Chief
Major Investigation Division
NTSB

~~QC'd March 1, 2001~~

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(2:05 p.m.)

MR. TYRRELL: I've turned on my tape recorder. It is 0704 Eastern Standard Time on Tuesday, February, the 20th, and I'm talking to Mr. John Hall.

Mr. Hall, I was wondering if you could start by explaining to me how this trip was arranged in the first place.

MR. HALL: The trip was arranged, started in March of 2000. I was involved with a company that originally was going to organize a golf tournament with the USS Missouri. It involved the Navy League.

The net effect of all of that is, to make a long story short, the Navy League wasn't able to get everything organized like they had told us they were going to do. And the golf tournament just couldn't be organized in the short time it needed to be done.

It was supposed to have happened in January of this year, and they just couldn't organize it. And so it was scuttled, or canceled and was stopped.

And we started again this year where we had enough time to do it.

Based on that, my association in meeting

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1 those people at the Missouri and subsequently, that's
2 how I got on -- that's how I got the opportunity to
3 organize the sub ride.

4 EXAMINATION

5 BY MR. TYRRELL:

6 Q How does one go about actually organizing one
7 of these visits?

8 A Well, in my case, while we were there touring
9 the Missouri and having dinner with those people and
10 discussing the golf tournament, you know, I found out.

11 I'm not sure exactly how I found out but I
12 found out that you could, in fact, visit either surface
13 ships or submarines and that there were civilians that
14 were allowed on these trips.

15 And so based on that, I said that would be
16 great. That would be an opportunity of a life time.
17 I'd love to work on that.

18 So, over the course of the year, when we
19 started the golf tournament and then when it was
20 canceled, you know, we just kept lobbying that we'd
21 like to be able to do this.

22 Q And who in the Navy would be --

23 A Well, in my case, that contact was Mickey
24 Nolan. Okay? His contact was Admiral Mackey.

25 Q Admiral Mackey?

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1 A But I didn't have direct contact with Admiral
2 Mackey so much as -- I've only met him twice. It was
3 primarily Mickey Nolan initially and then I think he
4 had discussions with Admiral Mackey.

5 And Admiral Mackey, I'm told now, organized
6 the trip.

7 Q Okay. And Mr. Nolan lives in Honolulu?

8 A That's correct.

9 Q And so he was close to where --

10 A Well, he was involved in the golf tournament.

11 Q Oh, okay.

12 A And the golf tournament subsequently didn't
13 go off for the reasons I stated.

14 Q Okay. When you were planning the trip, did
15 the Navy give any -- oh, I don't know -- did they put
16 any restrictions on it during the planning process? On
17 what you could do and not do?

18 Or, did they tell you anything about what
19 types of things would be available during the trip?

20 A No. What the Navy said, the Navy issued us a
21 one or two-page letter, told you the kind of clothing
22 to wear, what was allowed and what wasn't allowed.

23 I'd have to find that piece of paper.
24 Pictures couldn't be allowed unless the Captain
25 approved them. They wouldn't allow -- he had a certain

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1 kind of clothing to wear.

2 They didn't -- it was a preferable type of
3 clothing to wear.

4 They stated that it was possible the
5 submarine may have to go on an active duty phase, and
6 you may have to be retrieved and sent back to port on a
7 surface ship, if the sub didn't come back on its
8 own, for instance.

9 And they wouldn't tell you whether that was
10 the case or not, I assume, for security. They wouldn't
11 want you to know whether the sub was going out or
12 coming back.

13 And there was a, like I said, a one-page list
14 that kind of laid out all the different things.

15 Q If you can find that and you can send me a
16 copy, I'd be very appreciative.

17 A All right, sir, I'll look.

18 Q All right.

19 A I may have it. I may not have it. But, I'll
20 be happy to look.

21 Q I appreciate it.

22 A But, that was in -- that was issued by the --
23 was it the subpack?

24 Q Right. Okay.

25 A I got that a week ahead of time.

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1 Q I see. Did they ever put any restrictions on
2 the number of people in the group?

3 A No. Not as I recall, although I think we
4 were probably reaching their upper limits, that they
5 probably -- there was never actually any discussion of
6 how many could and how couldn't.

7 In our group, we thought it was 14 going
8 originally, and I'm sure you're aware that the Clarys
9 were not part of our original group.

10 Q Right. Right. Well, when they knew that you
11 had a group of fourteen, did the Navy comment in any
12 way about the number of people in the group?

13 A No, sir.

14 MR. TYRRELL: I was wondering now if you
15 could think back to the morning that you went on the
16 trip. And if you could just give me a running
17 narrative of what you did and what you saw, what you
18 heard throughout the day, starting with when you
19 arrived at the subbase in Pearl Harbor.

20 MR. HALL: We arrived at the sub-base full of
21 anticipation for an opportunity of a lifetime. We were
22 met by the Captain, the XO and the Chief in the boat,
23 and it was docked there in Pearl Harbor.

24 They explained to us that this would be a
25 great day and that they were going to do some training

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1 missions that day, and that they were happy to have us
2 aboard. And they wanted us to engage their crew in,
3 you know, don't just be -- be happy to talk to anybody
4 in the crew. The crew will talk to you.

5 And it was going to be a nice day that day.
6 It was sunny when we left, actually. I don't think it
7 changed, the weather, changed later in the day,
8 although when you're in a submarine, you don't really
9 realize that, or you don't know.

10 MR. TYRRELL: That's true.

11 MR. HALL: But, it started out a nice, sunny
12 morning, at least when we went out.

13 We left -- we all came aboard, went down the
14 back hatch, went to the crew mess. And were briefed by
15 the Captain, the XO on what we could do and what we
16 couldn't do in the boat.

17 We had two junior officers but senior on the
18 boat that would lead tours. We broke us up into two
19 groups. And going out, they would lead tours.

20 Everybody had the opportunity I think that
21 wanted to to go up to the conning tower on the way out,
22 which was quite a thrill, actually. That's what you
23 really think about when you think about submarines is
24 that submarine going out and you're on the conning
25 tower.

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1 It was pretty impressive.

2 MR. TYRRELL: I'll bet it was.

3 MR. HALL: At any rate, we didn't go anywhere
4 on that boat but what you didn't have somebody with
5 you, an officer.

6 And we went to, from a tour standpoint on the
7 way out, we went to everywhere they'd let us go. We
8 couldn't go anywhere after the crew mess because that's
9 where their propulsion system and engineering is.

10 And so the crew mess, went to the officers'
11 ward room, saw the officers' quarters, the crew
12 quarters, saw the torpedo room. We saw the sonar room.
13 We saw the control room.

14 Those are the areas that we were allowed to
15 go.

16 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

17 MR. HALL: And during the day -- and as you
18 went to those different places, they had sailors there
19 who explained what they did.

20 And we had discussions. You were allowed to
21 ask any questions. In this one piece of paper that was
22 sent out by the military, or the Navy, it said that if
23 you asked a question and you don't get an answer, don't
24 be offended. It's just because they don't choose to
25 answer that question.

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1 It either has something to do that's
2 classified or they don't care to have you know.

3 And that was pretty evident because as you
4 get to these different places and you ask questions
5 and, you know, if it was not something they wanted to
6 tell you, instead of not answering, they just said, "I
7 can't answer that question."

8 I must tell you, this Captain and the Officer
9 group and the crew was highly motivated, most very
10 professional. Unbelievable... you've got young guys
11 and you've got middle-aged guys and you've got even a
12 few older guys. The older guys being probably not much
13 past forty. That's old for the military, I think.

14 But, really, a very professional group. Kind
15 of on point most of the time that I ever, I mean, in my
16 discussions with every one of them, they couldn't have
17 been nicer and more accommodating to us.

18 We -- they didn't, for instance, in the
19 control room, you couldn't look -- you know, they
20 didn't want you dealing with -- they would just give
21 you parameters as far as saying how fast they could go,
22 how deep they could go.

23 They would say, for instance, "not more than
24 800 feet" or "not faster than twenty knots."

25 You know, you get the impression they could

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1 do more than that but they're not going to tell you
2 that.

3 So they were very informative as they went
4 about their business. It was always business first but
5 they were very informative. If you asked a question,
6 they would do their best to answer it.

7 And the tour was, you know, quite frankly,
8 the tours were fairly easy. I mean a submarine is a
9 very tight place.

10 Have you been in a submarine?

11 MR. TYRRELL: Yes. I have.

12 MR. HALL: You know, when you go, you know,
13 and the sailors are always moving around doing all
14 kinds of things. They're always going about their
15 business. You know, and as you go through a passage,
16 you have to turn sideways to get through them.

17 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

18 MR. HALL: I mean it is by its nature a
19 tight, compact place.

20 MR. TYRRELL: When you were going on the
21 tour, was that about the time that the submarine first
22 submerged?

23 MR. HALL: That's correct. I mean as it was
24 going out. Remember, I said we got in the crew's mess
25 and they said:

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1 "Well, we're going to divide you up into two
2 groups and you each have an officer and he'll take you
3 around to the different stations. And you'll discuss
4 in each different station with the seaman or officers
5 who are there," which is what they did.

6 So we had an escort, a babysitter, if you
7 like. And as we went to each one of these stations,
8 whoever was on station or on watch, if you had
9 questions, they'd answer them.

10 MR. TYRRELL: Were you in the control room
11 when they submerged?

12 MR. HALL: No, I was actually on the conning
13 tower. I was one of the last ones to come down.

14 MR. TYRRELL: Oh, okay.

15 MR. HALL: I don't think I was with the last
16 group but I was one of the last. I was in the crew
17 mess probably when we submerged because I came down and
18 went straight to the crew...

19 MR. TYRRELL: I see. I see. When you went
20 into the sonar room, can you describe for me what you
21 did there?

22 When you went into the sonar room, can you
23 describe for me what you did there and how long you
24 were there, and what they said to you?

25 MR. HALL: Probably, five to ten minutes. I

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1 don't know. It's hard to relate to time when you're
2 down there because, one, you're anticipating learning
3 new stuff and this is a neat deal.

4 There were four men in the sonar room at
5 screens and one man sitting standing behind them.

6 It was dark in that they were either - I
7 don't remember if they were running -- what color
8 lights they were running, but I don't think they were -
9 - it might have been a blue light, kind of.

10 And they explained to you how the sonar
11 works. Pretty dull to me but I sit there and listen to
12 that.

13 MR. TYRRELL: (Laughing).

14 MR. HALL: But, I mean they explain it and
15 you watch it and I mean I don't know that I could sit
16 there for six hours on a watch and do what they do.

17 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

18 MR. HALL: But, then they also had some tapes
19 of going out, that the whales that they put in, and
20 say, "All right, here's what a whale sounds like."

21 They actually had some tapes that would give
22 you different sounds because I don't think there was
23 much in the area to listen to on the existing sonar.

24 MR. TYRRELL: I see.

25 MR. HALL: So they explained that. And I

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1 don't think we stayed in the sonar room all that long.

2 MR. TYRRELL: How many people were in your
3 group after they split you up?

4 MR. HALL: Well, uh, six or seven.

5 MR. TYRRELL: Were you all in the sonar room
6 together?

7 MR. HALL: No. You passed through. You
8 know, because the hallways, you can't put seven people
9 in one of these little rooms like that at one time, in
10 the sonar room. It isn't big enough to put seven in
11 there.

12 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

13 MR. HALL: So the first three or four go in
14 there. And then they, as they move on to the next
15 area, then the next three or four come in there.

16 MR. TYRRELL: When you go into the control
17 room after the submarine was submerged, did they darken
18 the room, or did it have regular ambient light?

19 I mean, not ambient light but --

20 MR. HALL: The first time I was in the
21 control room, it was not dark.

22 MR. TYRRELL: It was not dark. Okay.

23 MR. HALL: and I'm not sure I ever recall it
24 being dark. I recall the sonar room being dark but I
25 don't recall the control room being dark.

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1 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. It just occurred to me.

2 I've talked to ten of the guests and I never asked
3 them whether the lights were on (laughing).

4 MR. HALL: No, I don't recall it being dark,
5 to be frank with you.

6 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Now I understand that it
7 wasn't until after lunch that they started putting the
8 submarine through these training maneuvers?

9 MR. HALL: I think that's probably true. We
10 had lunch at a pretty good depth. And I know at that
11 depth they wanted to retrieve some water from the
12 torpedo tubes because we all got a bottle of water
13 tested to a certain depth.

14 And I think we had lunch and then I think we
15 started to do the different maneuvers.

16 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Can you describe for me
17 how the maneuvers -- what maneuvers were executed and
18 where the guests were, and that sort of thing?

19 MR. HALL: Well, you know, during the day, as
20 you took these tours, you got an opportunity to either
21 be explained to or try certain things.

22 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

23 MR. HALL: Early on, I think everybody who
24 wanted to got an opportunity to sit at one of the
25 controls. Okay?

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1 And I actually didn't do that because it just
2 didn't look that interesting to me to sit there and
3 look at a dial and hold on to, you know, a steering
4 wheel. Okay?

5 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

6 MR. HALL: Because all you're really doing is
7 looking at a dial and a man sits, you know, a Chief
8 sits behind you who actually -- see, I understand
9 something about airplanes.

10 So what they try to do is trim this sub up
11 the same way you trim an airplane up so that an
12 airplane goes through the air, a submarine goes through
13 the water with the least resistance.

14 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

15 MR. HALL: And it's not just one guy who
16 controls this. It's quite a few people who have to be
17 in sink in order to make the sub go through that water
18 and do the things it needs to do as efficiently as it
19 needs to do it.

20 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

21 MR. HALL: I didn't actually ever sit at the
22 controls because it just didn't look that appealing to
23 me. But, I think most people in our party at one time
24 or another, early on before lunch, had the opportunity
25 to do that.

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1 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

2 MR. HALL: When we started after lunch and we
3 started the certain different maneuvers, I know we did
4 some -- he went into some high-speed maneuvers. And I
5 don't know that I really understand what he actually
6 did other than I know we did some banking at 15, 20 or
7 25 degrees on both ways. I know he did some high-speed
8 turns underwater.

9 And then we did this emergency blow down to
10 the top. And then we were headed home. Except we
11 didn't head home.

12 MR. TYRRELL: Do you remember when they went
13 to periscope depth?

14 MR. HALL: I do.

15 MR. TYRRELL: Can you describe that process
16 and where you were? Where everybody else was, if you
17 can remember?

18 MR. HALL: I can't describe where everybody
19 else was. I can pretty -- I can describe where I was.

20 MR. TYRRELL: All right.

21 MR. HALL: After we had done these maneuvers,
22 banking maneuvers and high-speed turns -- because they
23 were at a pretty good depth when he did that -- he then
24 said, "We're going to do this emergency blow-down."

25 And then he asked me if I'd like the honor of

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1 pulling the two levers for 'balance' picture. And then
2 so I'm in the left in the , have you been in the
3 control room?

4 MR. TYRRELL: Yes.

5 MR. HALL: Okay, so you know you have the two
6 steering columns and the Chief sits behind the two
7 steering columns, right?

8 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

9 MR. HALL: And to the left of that is where
10 another seaman does -- there's numbers and gauges there
11 and switches and things. And that's where I was, to
12 the left of those.

13 I think I was up kind of towards the side of
14 the wall 90 degrees from those two driving positions,
15 are these two valves.

16 And they're kind of high up on the panel.

17 So, when he told me to do that, I moved over
18 and met this particular seaman and he started
19 explaining to me how this drill was going to go.

20 And he did it about three times because I
21 want to make sure that it wasn't going to be any kind
22 of screw-up. I wanted to make sure I can do what I was
23 supposed to do.

24 And while he was explaining that to me,
25 everybody else was kind of getting organized, meaning

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1 the crew, the captain.

2 I mean, I wasn't paying a whole lot of
3 attention to what was going on other than, okay, my job
4 is going to be this. You know, you're going to hear
5 three bolls. And when you do that, you'll pull these -
6 they unlock these two levers. You pull them down.
7 You have to count out loud for ten seconds. And then
8 you push them back up and lock them back into place.

9 And then you sit down. That was my
10 instructions. Okay?

11 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

12 MR. HALL: So we go to periscope depth.
13 There is an Officer of the Watch. It happened to be a
14 guy named Cohen, a younger guy, a young JG, I think.

15 And he makes a couple of turns. Doesn't say
16 a whole lot. Makes a couple of turns on the
17 periscopes. And the Captain says, "I want to see."

18 And he steps up and he takes a couple of
19 turns.

20 And he actually asks the periscope to go up
21 two feet. He just said, "Up two," is what his words
22 were, as I recall.

23 And then he took a couple of more turns.

24 Now there are flat screens in there but where
25 I sit, you don't really see them because I'm all the

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1 way to the left side of the submarine and I'm, you
2 know, right there where all those switches, gauges and
3 dials are.

4 And, you know, you've got, well, you just
5 don't see it because they're not readily easy for you
6 to see at that point where you sit there.

7 But, you know, everybody else in our group --
8 I won't speculate, but everybody else in our groups
9 says "You can't see anything on those flat screens."

10 I mean, you know, whatever they see in the
11 periscope, you see.

12 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

13 MR. HALL: So then we go see -- I believe he
14 said "Let's go to 400." And so -- and the sub actually
15 goes down there quite quickly. I'm amazed at how this
16 big, mammoth thing moves pretty quick.

17 He goes to 400. He ran through a whole bunch
18 of checks, me and the sailors, talking back to him.
19 Him agreeing or just, you know, acknowledging them.

20 And then we started this procedure and there
21 were three bells, boom, boom, boom. And then the
22 sailor next to me said, "Okay." And I pulled these two
23 levers out and I counted out loud to ten -- "A thousand
24 one, thousand two, thousand three."

25 I really had to kind of yell it out. Put the

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1 two levers back in. The seaman said, "Sit down." And
2 I sat down. And that submarine then began to rise very
3 quickly.

4 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. And can you carry on
5 with the narrative of what happened next?

6 MR. HALL: Well, that submarine came out of
7 that water pretty quick. You don't have any windows
8 obviously so you can't see. But, the sensation for me
9 was, you know, you don't know when you're out of the
10 water until you start to feel that submarine fall
11 forward.

12 And, you know, the analogy I gave the other
13 day was like in an airliner when it lands, then the
14 nose comes down and hits the runway.

15 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

16 MR. HALL: Well, it's the same way in that
17 sub. You know you're out of the water coming down
18 because you can feel it starting to -- the sensation of
19 it going forward, you know.

20 And about the time we had just started that
21 sensation to come down, there was a loud bang, a loud
22 noise. And the submarine shuddered, meaning it got
23 shook.

24 And, uh, at that point, the Captain, he said,
25 "Jesus, what the hell was that?"

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1 And he immediately, we're all sitting there
2 kind of -- stunned is not the word because we don't
3 know. I mean we'd never done this before.

4 But, you know something wasn't right,
5 especially when he said that. And he immediately
6 turned and got on the periscope.

7 And it wasn't but a few seconds later that he
8 says, "We have hit the ship." And he named it. So he
9 must have been able to see the stern clearly in the
10 periscope.

11 And he said, "Would my guests go immediately
12 to the crew mess?"

13 And everybody just started getting out of
14 there. And the crew mess is not very -- it's down one
15 deck. But, you have to go forward about six, eight,
16 ten feet and you hit a stairwell and you go down that
17 stairwell. And you come back, you know, ten feet and
18 you're in the crew mess.

19 So we didn't take long to get to the crew
20 mess. And when we got to the -- I was one of the -- I
21 was about probably the third or fourth person down to
22 the crew mess.

23 And there is a big, flat screen in the crew
24 mess. And when you went in there, you could actually
25 see the ship. And it was, by my estimations, I didn't

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1 think the ship was very big because it didn't -- there
2 wasn't a whole lot of it in the water, up sticking
3 above the water.

4 If I had to guess -- and I'm not going to
5 guess, but that ship didn't look very big to me. But,
6 you could clearly see it was a ship.

7 I didn't see any life rafts. I didn't see
8 anything like that. But, you could see the ship. And
9 so, obviously, the periscope was following the ship
10 because -- and we weren't in the crew mess twenty
11 seconds as a group once we all got there, when the
12 seaman said:

13 "We need to move you to the torpedo room. We
14 need to convert this mess over to a first aid station."

15 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

16 MR. HALL: So, two seamen led us all down to
17 the torpedo room. And that's on the same -- that's on
18 the same level as the crew mess. So you just have to
19 go forward.

20 And it didn't take long to get us in there.
21 And, of course, we're all kind of shook because now all
22 of us as a group are standing in the torpedo room. And
23 guys are going back and forth at a fast pace,
24 hurriedly. Grabbing all kinds of stuff.

25 And a lot of things were stored in the

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1 torpedo room. There's extra room there -- a lot of
2 first aid, a lot of ropes, rope ladder gaffs, and that
3 kind of thing.

4 And we actually helped them. The gaffs are
5 all lashed down so I helped them unlash some gaffs. We
6 helped to pass some ropes over. We helped to pass a
7 ladder over because they had to crawl up on where the
8 torpedoes sit on a rack.

9 And on the rack in-between there were no
10 torpedoes. So that whole rack was kind of barren.
11 But, down in-between there, you had to crawl up on top
12 of the rack to get that stuff out.

13 MR. TYRRELL: I see.

14 MR. HALL: So we helped to pass it out. And,
15 periodically, officers would come and go and tell us
16 what's going on. Plus, we can hear everything on the
17 intercom.

18 MR. TYRRELL: Can you tell me some of the
19 things that you heard over the intercom?

20 MR. HALL: Yes. I heard the captain come
21 over the intercom not very long after this happened and
22 we got in the torpedo room. He told his crew that they
23 were trained to -- that there had been this accident
24 occurred, we had hit the ship and there were life boats
25 in the water and people in the life boats.

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1 He didn't see anybody in the water that
2 wasn't in a life boat. And they were trained for this,
3 to render assistance and for the crew to, even though
4 the adrenalin is pumping, to slow down, think what
5 they're doing it and do it the proper way.

6 I remember him saying that. He then said --
7 there were a lot of announcements, some by him, some by
8 other crew officers, obviously.

9 There was some discussion. They evidently --
10 and this is a little bit of speculation on my part.
11 But, we were sitting down in the torpedo room and we
12 can't see anything or do anything, and only what we
13 hear.

14 I think they had, whoever was in the conning
15 tower was trying to communicate with whoever was in the
16 life boat. They couldn't communicate. They didn't
17 know whether they were Japanese or Chinese to begin
18 with because the word came down:

19 "Does anybody speak Japanese or Chinese?"
20 Because they didn't know. And whoever was in those
21 life boats didn't speak any English.

22 So you find out later the captain is one of
23 those life boats and he didn't speak any English.

24 And I think then there was a discussion over
25 that as they come down that they couldn't -- before I

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1 left the crew mess, which I hadn't been in there
2 twenty, thirty seconds -- maybe a minute at the most,
3 but it was about 20 plus seconds before we all got
4 down. And we couldn't have all been there 20 seconds
5 before they herded us out as a group.

6 But, it took, you know, a good minute, minute
7 and a half to get everybody down there.

8 There was a diver ready to go-- if you go
9 past the officer's mess going aft, that's where the
10 hatch is, about six to eight, ten feet.

11 I mean, not the officer but the crew mess.
12 That's where the hatch is. That's the hatch we came in
13 and out of.

14 And when we boarded and it was the hatch we
15 went out when we disembarked.

16 And they had a diver there ready to go.

17 MR. TYRRELL: He was all decked out in the
18 scuba equipment?

19 MR. HALL: He was ready to go. But, they
20 couldn't, you know, they couldn't launch him because
21 the seas were just too rough. If they'd opened that
22 hatch, they would have taken on water.

23 MR. TYRRELL: Did they make an announcement
24 to that effect?

25 MR. HALL: Yes, they did make an

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1 announcement, said, "You know, it's better if we just,
2 you know, follow these life boats around and make sure
3 that we've rendered assistance."

4 See, they never saw anybody in the water who
5 wasn't already in the life boat. And they said:

6 "We'd just better follow them around until we
7 get Coast Guard on here, or we're going to have bigger
8 problems getting people trying to disembark them from
9 life rafts and try to put them on the boat."

10 They were all about trying to figure out how
11 to render assistance. They had the messes set up for
12 emergencies. They had all the first aid kits laid out.

13 The reason I know all this is when we
14 actually came back to the crew mess, their stuff was
15 everywhere. And they had to then start putting it back
16 to make room in the crew mess.

17 I didn't see what they did in the ward room,
18 but we were told earlier the ward room can be set up
19 for an operating room. They obviously didn't need it.

20 But, I think they tried to -- they had a big
21 rope ladder. I think they tried to put it over the
22 conning tower, and it was just a problem.

23 MR. TYRRELL: I see.

24 MR. HALL: So they felt they couldn't
25 properly take the people out of the life boats without

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1 getting them hurt more. And it was better off to just-

2 - pardon me?

3 MR. TYRRELL: Oh, I'm sorry. I had to clear
4 my throat.

5 MR. HALL: I think they thought it was better
6 just to follow them around the submarine and keep track
7 of everybody until the Coast Guard got there.

8 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

9 MR. HALL: But they were all about, if they
10 could, rendering assistance.

11 Now had this been somewhere else and they
12 weren't relatively close to shore, I...

13 (BEGIN TAPE 8, SIDE B:)

14 MR. TYRRELL: When you say the seas were
15 washing over the boat, you're saying they were washing
16 over the submarine?

17 MR. HALL: Yes. You see that when you see
18 all the pictures here.

19 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

20 MR. HALL: I couldn't tell it then but I see
21 all the, you know, they show these submarines every
22 damned day. And all you have to do is see and the
23 water washes right over the top of them.

24 MR. TYRRELL: You're talking about the film
25 they're showing on television?

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1 MR. HALL: Yes. Yes. Yes. You can see it
2 wash over.

3 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

4 MR. HALL: And that hatch is right aft of the
5 conning tower.

6 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

7 MR. HALL: About ten feet, maybe.

8 MR. TYRRELL: Could you tell me something
9 about, if I could take you back to when you were in the
10 control room when they were -- after lunch.

11 Can you tell me if people were moving about?

12 MR. HALL: During these maneuvers?

13 MR. TYRRELL: Yes.

14 MR. HALL: I think you picked a spot that you
15 weren't in anybody's way but, yet, you could hang on to
16 something.

17 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

18 MR. HALL: Because, you know, on these
19 maneuvers, you went at these angles. You did have to
20 hang on.

21 MR. TYRRELL: But, you weren't told to stand
22 in a particular place? You picked a convenient spot?
23 Everybody?

24 MR. HALL: Well, the Captain was right in
25 front of the periscope and there's a console. In my

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1 particular case, there was a little jumpseat in front
2 of that console and I sat on that jumpseat.

3 : And so everybody basically was behind me.

4 But, earlier in the day -- there's plenty of room in
5 that control room.

6 I mean it's tight but there's plenty of room.

7 I don't think I ever -- I don't think anybody had a
8 problem with enough room or places to stay and stand in
9 where you can see everything in addition to the seamen
10 that were on duty there.

11 MR. TYRRELL: Was there a lot of talking
12 going on in the control room?

13 MR. HALL: I don't think so. You know,
14 you're anticipating -- first of all, you don't know
15 what to say. And you're anticipating hearing what they
16 say. You want to hear what they say.

17 So I don't -- I don't recall any talking.

18 MR. TYRRELL: I understand that there was --
19 I think his name was Captain Huger? He was like a tour
20 guide? Is that correct?

21 MR. HALL: He wasn't a tour guide. He was
22 the Chief of Staff for the Admiral of the submarine.

23 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

24 MR. HALL: And he was aboard as our liaison.

25 MR. TYRRELL: Did he help arrange for the

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1 visit?

2 MR. HALL: Not that I'm aware of.

3 MR. TYRRELL: Is it normal -- you probably
4 wouldn't know the answer to that.

5 Well, did he say that it was normal to have
6 such a high-ranking officer accompany a tour?

7 MR. HALL: Well, he's I won't say only a full
8 bird colonel, but he is a full bird colonel. You know,
9 that I would consider that high-ranking.

10 He is a former submarine commander. Why he
11 was there, I don't know. But I think they do probably
12 send a representative out when they take these tours.
13 I mean I assume that. I don't know that for sure.

14 MR. TYRRELL: Okay, but he hadn't been a
15 point of contact before?

16 MR. HALL: I never met him until that
17 morning.

18 MR. TYRRELL: Or talked to him on the phone?

19 MR. HALL: I never talked to him on the phone
20 until that morning.

21 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. All right.

22 MR. HALL: Nice guy. He was most of the time
23 after this accident happened, and a lot of times, he
24 was the individual that would come and back to the
25 torpedo room and try to tell us what was going on.

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1 trying to render assistance, we were basically totally
2 out of the way once we got to that torpedo room.

3 We later moved back into the officers ward
4 room. As a group, we all sat in there. And pretty
5 much out of the way of everybody, as a group, which was
6 more comfortable for us because that torpedo room,
7 basically, you're standing in an aisle.

8 There's not many places to sit down or get
9 off your feet, you know.

10 MR. TYRRELL: Right. Okay. Is there
11 anything else that we haven't discussed that you think
12 I should know about?

13 MR. HALL: Well, I was trying to think.
14 Oh... no. I'm sure I'll think of something when I'm
15 not talking to you.

16 MR. TYRRELL: Well, if you do think of
17 something and it's important, I'd appreciate it if you
18 would give me a call.

19 MR. HALL: I could tell you that the Captain
20 came back and talked to us when we were in the ward
21 room for five minutes maybe -- I won't say ten. Five
22 minutes.

23 He told us that the accident happened and
24 that, you know, we were rendering assistance. I don't
25 think he came and talked to us until all the Japanese

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1 had been taken out of life raft and taken back by the
2 Coast Guard.

3 Then came on and said, "We're determining
4 whether we'll stay on site."

5 Because at that point, you know, we figured
6 we'd be heading back in. I think that's when he came
7 and told us that they were going to need to stay out
8 there and assist in the search and rescue.

9 It didn't make all our people too happy.
10 But, you know, this is a situation. You make the best
11 of it and do what you have to do.

12 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

13 MR. HALL: So, as a group, we pretty well
14 stayed in the officers ward room. They fed us. I mean
15 there wasn't much for us to do. We just played cards.

16 And, later on, they found an area for us to
17 get in the bunks. But that submarine popping around
18 like a cork on the water was not real comfortable.

19 MR. TYRRELL: I'll bet.

20 MR. HALL: Because it's not made to do that.

21 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

22 MR. HALL: Those seas are rough enough. You
23 know, at that point, the people who hadn't taken any
24 seasickness tablets, we all took them because we
25 thought we were going to be popping around there for a

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1 long time.

2 MR. TYRRELL: Did the Captain ever say why
3 the accident happened? Did he give any kind of
4 explanation to you?

5 MR. HALL: No.

6 MR. TYRRELL: No?

7 MR. HALL: He did -- he did -- that morning
8 on our way in, which is 8:30 or 9 o'clock in the
9 morning, I remember him coming into the, because few of
10 us, we all stayed up as late as we could.

11 I mean time goes really slow in a situation
12 like that. You're all in a small room and there's not
13 much you can do and there was a point where he came in
14 that morning, that Saturday morning, and said:

15 "Listen, this is an international incident.
16 It's a tragedy and I don't know what's going to happen
17 here. But, I will tell you that you need to just tell
18 the truth, not embellish the truth. If you don't know
19 something, don't say something or don't think what you
20 think happened. Only say what you saw and what
21 actually happened. And, tell the truth."

22 He said he'd enjoyed having us on. I mean he
23 couldn't have been more professional, quite frankly.
24 He couldn't have been more nice and accommodating. I
25 mean he had unbelievable grief and sorrow. You could

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1 see it.

2 He was, you know, and the crew took on a
3 demeanor of being shook up, too. They went about their
4 business but nobody -- they didn't talk about it. I
5 mean they were all -- they all knew that this was going
6 to be some kind of major problem.

7 And that morning, I had breakfast and I sat
8 in the crews mess with the Chief and he said:

9 "You know, I am still pinching myself. I
10 don't believe this happened. I don't believe we hit
11 that -- I don't believe this happened."

12 The crew just couldn't believe this actually
13 happened.

14 MR. TYRRELL: Did any of the crew that you
15 talked to make any comment about why it happened?

16 MR. HALL: No. I don't think there was
17 anybody even made a -- there was not discussion, at
18 least amongst us or around us. I don't know what they
19 did amongst themselves.

20 But I can tell you we had an officer with us
21 the whole time, even when we were in the ward room.

22 We weren't there sitting there by ourselves.
23 We had a young officer the entire time. Our
24 babysitter, basically, is all.

25 And he couldn't have been more accommodating,

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1 a nice guy. But, you know, they all knew that this is
2 not supposed to happen. Okay?

3 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

4 MR. HALL: And of course they're in the Navy.
5 They understand these things a lot more than we
6 understood.

7 It's the last thing we expected to happen. I
8 can assure you of that.

9 MR. TYRRELL: We had received a report from
10 somebody that alcohol had been served to the guests on
11 the submarine. Can you --?

12 MR. HALL: I wish.

13 MR. TYRRELL: (Laughing).

14 MR. HALL: I could tell you that issue came
15 up when we were sitting in the ward room there after
16 about four or five hours. And, God, could we use a
17 drink.

18 And I remember asking this officer babysitter
19 and he said, "There's no alcohol on board this ship.
20 Not allowed."

21 There was no alcohol -- of any type. But,
22 boy, could we have used a drink after sitting in that
23 ward room for hours.

24 Because I remember us all kind of saying,
25 "Could we have a drink?" Because we were playing

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1 cards. And, well, that's absolutely false.

2 MR. TYRRELL: All right, then. I think we've
3 covered everything. And I really appreciate you
4 getting up early to talk to me today.

5 MR. HALL: Well, that's fine. I gave -- did
6 Mr. Clary call you yesterday?

7 MR. TYRRELL: No, I haven't --

8 MR. HALL: He talked to me yesterday and I
9 told him you were trying to get a hold of him.

10 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

11 MR. HALL: I gave him your number.

12 He said that he was driving through
13 Washington today. You'll probably get a call from him
14 today.

15 MR. TYRRELL: Great.

16 MR. HALL: I think he's headed home.

17 And his phone doesn't work real well because
18 it's getting jammed. And I gave him your number, and
19 I'm sure he's going to call you.

20 MR. TYRRELL: That would be great because I
21 was calling him yesterday.

22 MR. HALL: You won't get through.

23 MR. TYRRELL: No, it was just continually
24 busy, you know, every time I called.

25 MR. HALL: He said it's broke, basically.

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1 MR. TYRRELL: I thought maybe he had taken:
2 the phone off the hook, you know.

3 MR. HALL: He's not home. He was in Florida
4 and he was driving to -- I think he lives in
5 Massachusetts.

6 MR. TYRRELL: Oh, okay.

7 MR. HALL: But, I did give him your name and
8 number and told him you were trying to get a hold of
9 him.

10 MR. TYRRELL: Well, I appreciate that.

11 Let me give you my mailing address so that if
12 you find that letter from the Navy, you'll be able to
13 mail a copy to me.

14 MR. HALL: Yes, sir.

15 MR. TYRRELL: It's the National
16 Transportation Safety Board, Office of Marine Safety,
17 490 L'Enfant Plaza East, Washington, D.C. zip code
18 20594.

19 MR. HALL: Okay.

20 MR. TYRRELL: And I really appreciate it.

21 MR. HALL: I'll look for it.

22 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Well once again, thank
23 you very much.

24 MR. HALL: Thank you, sir.

25 MR. TYRRELL: All right, bye-bye.

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(TAPE CONCLUDED.)

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